

ABOUT Books

Without Compass

By Joanne Berghold
Published 2014 by JB Photography,
Livingston, MT
\$35 hardcover

“With the sun at my back, I choose a direction and head off to find an inviting gravel road; I turn off the radio and drive slowly,” writes Livingston photographer Joanne Berghold. “As I wander, I look for tranquil images of clouds, sky and open land to photograph. I am alone in Montana’s magnificence, without a plan or a clock, and I simply float in the landscape.”

Berghold’s third collection of Montana scenes, *Without Compass*, ensnares that feeling of floating through an ever-changing landscape, attentive to shape, shadow and nuance.

For 25 years, Berghold has roamed the back roads, capturing images of this vast country. “I have had wonderful adventures ... There were flat tires and long walks to the nearest house and kind people who rescued me. I had my dog and plenty of water and food in a cooler so I was not afraid and, in fact, I had fun,” she says.

Without Compass offers 102 black and white images of the grand, patterned landscapes she encountered. In his introduction, Montana author and environmental activist Rick Bass writes that Berghold’s “beauty of tone, beauty of composition, beauty of shape ... seems to exist on a different plane entirely.”

Berghold was born and raised in New York City and fell in love with Montana as a young girl. Her family began to visit the Rocky Mountains, fueling her passion for the West.

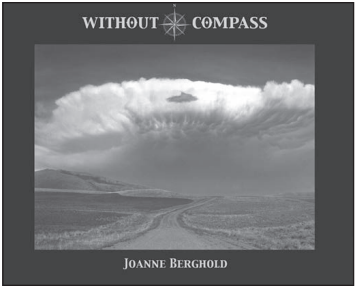
Berghold went on to marry, raise three children and earn a BFA in photography. She pursued her art while living near New York City and eventually, with her husband, built a cabin at the foot of the Crazy Mountains near Willsall. She moved permanently to Livingston in 2008.

“The path of life is often trackless,” she writes. “We steer our way by a gentle compass of heart and spirit.”

Author Jim Harrison says of the images in her new book: “I love them, and many of them I want to live within, just like I do good paintings ... you certainly have a fabulous eye.”

The photographer has published two previous books: *Old Windows – Old Doors* in 2012, and *Montana Hometown Rodeo* in 2004. Visit her at www.JoanneBerghold.com.

– Kristi Niemeyer



This Vanishing

By Dave Caserio
Published 2014 by CW Books, Cincinnati,
OH
\$18 softcover

In “Forensic Love,” the first poem in Billings poet Dave Caserio’s debut collection, he imagines his coffin jettisoned into space and plucked from the deep, to reveal “what palaver we, as humans are,/ that lingers in these bones.” It’s an arresting image, of a “bin of bones” spinning through space, carrying some remnant of our conjoined humanity, like Lucy from Olduvai Gorge – both terrifying and beautiful.

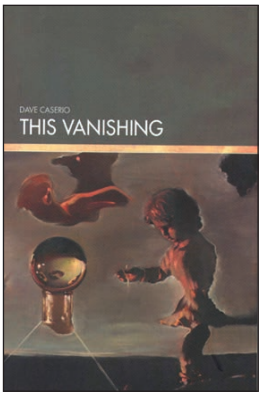
That’s the ebb and flow of this book – poems that are harsh, graphic and rimmed with tenderness. From the rooftops of Hell’s Kitchen to south-side Chicago, from a father who raped his daughter, to a mother whose fake eyeball keeps falling out: “On Halloween I’d leave it/ In the window in the middle of a pumpkin pie.” From the Aurora Borealis, “that careful, lilting hum/ of a pearl being formed” to tangerines “rare as China, still.”

Caserio says he strives to make poems that “adhere to what is pure, true and passionate and to not shy away from discomfort.” The comfort that does illuminate work is the solace of storytelling, the music of language, and our common threads of experience, lifting off the page: “Our frail, human ululation .../ The still lingering communion/ for all that is alive.”

Montana Poet Laureate Tami Haaland calls the collection “earthy and gently articulate ... streetwise and elegant.”

Caserio is a founding member of the Big Sky Writing collective, the producer of a series of poetry-in-performance events, and was invited to read his work in October at the Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival in Newark, NJ. He also shares his writing and speaking skills with various community outreach organizations, including Humanities Montana, Arts Without Boundaries, the Billings YMCA/Writer’s Voice “Poets on the Prairie” program and the Billings Clinic Cancer Center.

– Kristi Niemeyer



Adventures of a Misfit, Coming of Age in the 50s and 60s

By Lyle Manley
Published 2014 by the author; distributed by
Sweetgrass Books, Helena, MT
\$24 softcover

Lyle Manley’s recollections of boyhood adventures begin at the ripe old age of four, and continue on a lively romp through sixth grade. His gift for self-expression arrived at an early age, when he discovered the joys of rhyming couplets, using words that were highly inappropriate for a kindergartener.

Additionally, he felt the disappointment of an underappreciated visual artist when his idea to paint the driveway with lead-based paints met with strong disapproval. Ditto for his crayon creations on the bedroom walls.



When Manley was due to enter first grade, his family pulled up stakes and moved from Long Beach, CA, to his father’s hometown of Pony. He spent the summer with grandparents, in a rural setting where the possibilities for boys to do “what boys do best” were vast, before beginning grade school in Bozeman.

The author adored his grandparents, and wanted to emulate his grandfather’s gentle demeanor. “During the summer of 1959, I wanted to grow up to be just like him,” he writes. “I still do.”

His daydreams of being a rich and famous author, which would elevate him above attending regular school, often put him at odds with his teachers and parents. With tongue planted firmly in cheek, Manley defends myriad boyhood transgressions.

Baseball, winter sledding adventures, summer camping trips, and lots of relatives close by are fodder for his entertaining story. His was a rich and full life, and he has only written about the first 12 years!

Manley is a graduate of The University of Montana School of Law and worked as a lawyer for the state until his retirement in 2009. This is his first book.

– Judy Shafter

Granny Greeny Says ...

Listen Louder

By Ina Albert
Published August 2014 by Mountain
Greenery Press, Whitefish, MT
\$9.46 softcover (also available in
e-book and audio formats)

Whitefish author Ina Albert believes listening is fast becoming a lost skill.

“In our attention-deficit society, emails, texts and tweets are no substitute for the exchange of understanding created by face-to-face conversations,” she says.

To communicate the importance of listening to kids, parents and grandparents, she created Granny Greeny, “the best listener we know.”

Granny, attired in green, of course, leans forward and listens with her whole body: with eyes that never leave the speaker’s face, a head that never moves, hands that don’t fidget, feet that never tap, and a heart filling with love.

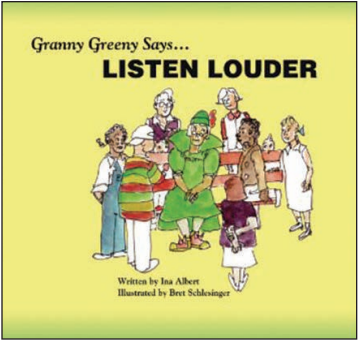
The Ringmaster of the Biggest Clown Circus on Earth, along with clowns from far and near, and the children who visit Granny in The Farm In the Zoo, all experience her special gift. They discover that you never have to say a word to understand what makes children happy. All you have to do is listen louder.

Bret Schlesinger’s gentle illustrations enhance this playful story about how to make meaningful connections with each other, and an interactive game helps readers practice using Granny’s gift.

Albert, an adjunct professor at Flathead Valley Community College, co-authored *Write Your Self Well ... Journal Your Self to Health*. A chapter by Albert appears in the new anthology *Disquiet Times* and her stories for children and adults have been published in *Chicago Parent Magazine*, *Belief Net*, *Jewish Magazine* and *Sojourner*. Her monthly columns appear in *Montana Woman Magazine* and *406 Woman*.

Schlesinger is a teacher, administrator, adjunct professor and artist, whose work of delicate ink-and-watercolor paintings have been shown in universities, galleries and museums throughout the U.S.

“I love the lesson Granny Greeny teaches in this book: that learning to listen louder is the secret to helping kids express and understand their thoughts and feelings,” writes Dina Rose, author of *It’s Not About the Broccoli*. “Every parent needs to learn this lesson.” For more on the book, visit listenlouder.net.



Montana 1864, Indians, Emigrants, and Gold in the Territorial Year

By Ken Egan Jr.
Published 2014 by Riverbend Publishing,
Helena, MT
\$19.95 softcover

Ken Egan, director of Humanities Montana, has authored a very engaging synopsis of the year that Montana became a territory. Book chapters, which correspond to the months of the year, trace various events that occurred each month in 1864.

The format not only provides insights into what was happening, but also offers a Native American perspective of what each month meant to various tribes: *March is the Geese Arrive*

Moon. It is also known as the time that Napi Comes Running Down Off of the Mountains, the Moon of the Warm Chinook Winds. It is the moon of the gophers, too. Poems and passages by Native Americans are spliced with journal entries, newspaper accounts and Egan’s own rich imagining of time, place and people.

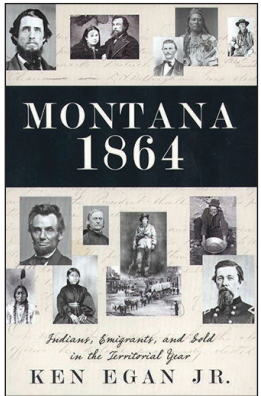
The book brims with entertaining vignettes about many Montana historical characters, including Henry Plummer, Father De Smet, James Fergus, Calamity Jane, Plenty Coups, Jim Bridger, John Bozeman, Wilbur Sanders and, of course, our first territorial governor, Sidney Edgerton, all neatly packaged in a timeline. December, for example, was the month “in which Judge Hosmer calls out the Vigilantes, Governor Edgerton calls the first legislature into session, and Calamity Jane arrives in Montana.”

Many of those same characters became the namesakes of our communities, counties and landmarks. The book also reveals how Montana’s fate was entwined with the Civil War. Many gold seekers, such as the notable Four Georgians who discovered gold on Last Chance Gulch, were actually southerners who fled the South during the war. Most were Confederate sympathizers. There was clearly concern within the Lincoln Administration that this new territory, if allowed to become a state, could be sympathetic to the Confederate cause.

Fortunately, the Civil War was winding down, but the sympathies of the populace probably slowed the statehood process. It was obvious from the first election that there was an even divide among legislators loyal to the Union and those still devoted to the Confederate cause. Montana still had to wait another 25 years to become a state, thus enduring a longer maturation process.

Egan’s book offers a quick, delightful read for anyone interested in the birth of our state – and an important reminder of the role Montana played in economic development and the politics of an emerging nation.

– Graydon Moll



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Please send book proposals to: Acquisitions, PO Box 5630, Helena, MT 59604. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or your materials will not be returned, and do not send original art or photographs. For more information, visit www.farcountrypress.com.

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